



Vision and Introduction

I. CARLSBAD - THE VISION

A City which provides a balanced variety of land uses for living, business, employment, recreation, and open space opportunities.

A City which offers safe, attractive residential areas with a wide range of housing types, styles, and price levels in a variety of locations.

A City which balances the diverse living, playing, and working needs and services of the four sub-communities within the City.

A City which provides adequate public facilities to preserve the quality of life of its residents.

A City which provides a diversified, comprehensive park system that offers a wide variety of recreational activities and park facilities.

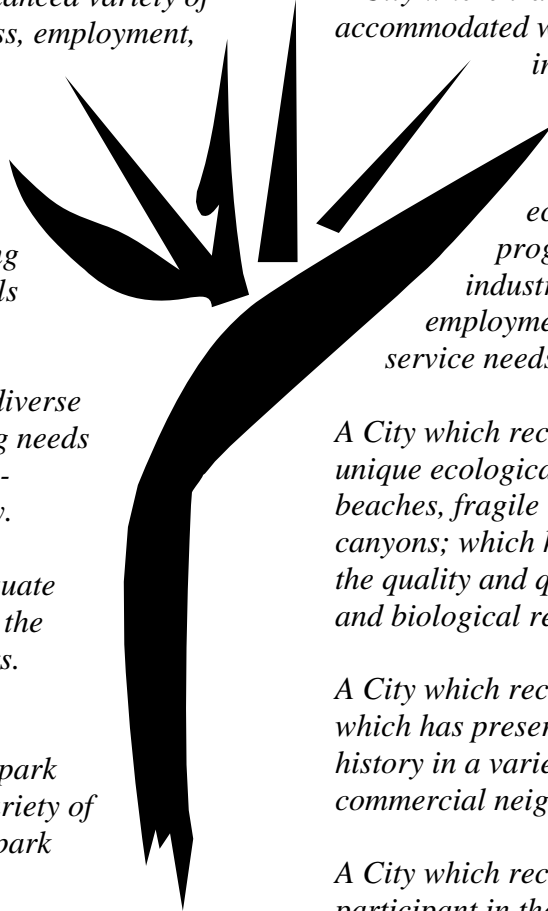
A City where travel is safe and easily accommodated whether it be by mass transit, in an automobile, on a bicycle or as a pedestrian.

A City committed to the economic growth of progressive commercial and industrial businesses to serve the employment, shopping, recreation, and service needs of its residents.

A City which recognizes the value of its unique ecological position as a coastal city of beaches, fragile lagoons, and unspoiled canyons; which has taken steps to conserve the quality and quantity of its air, water, land and biological resources.

A City which recognizes its own history; which has preserved and integrated that history in a variety of residential and commercial neighborhoods.

A City which recognizes its role as a participant in the solution of regional issues.



II. INTRODUCING CARLSBAD

The City of Carlsbad is a coastal community located in the northwestern corner of San Diego County, California, approximately 35 miles north of downtown San Diego and approximately 90 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. It shares borders with the incorporated cities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos, and Encinitas and a small unincorporated area of the County of San Diego (See Map 1 - "Regional Location" and Map 2 - "City Boundaries").

The City first developed around the turn of the century as a rail stop on the southern side of the Buena Vista Lagoon, taking its name from Karlsbad, Bavaria, because of the quality of the mineral waters found in both cities. From its inception, until well after incorporation as a general law city in 1952, Carlsbad existed as a quaint village-by-the-sea. However, following a series of annexations begun in the 1960s the City began to grow gradually in area and population. From its original 7.5 square miles and 7,000 people, the City grew to its current 42.2 square miles and approximately 65,700 people (as of January 1992). All lands within the City's official, state-approved "sphere of influence", including all unincorporated "county islands", have now been annexed, with the likely result that Carlsbad's incorporated area will not grow appreciably in the future. As the current boundaries are now likely to be the City's ultimate boundaries, future growth will occur only from within.

As of 1993, a little over half of the City had been developed. Another quarter of the City is in various stages of planning, thus setting the stage for additional near- and mid-term development. Since 1986 Carlsbad has been a "growth management" city in which the major public facilities are being carefully planned, financed, and their capacities sized to serve a targeted ultimate population and number of residential units (see the Land Use Element for more information on facilities planning and growth management).

In addition to the original village (now an active Redevelopment Area), the City now includes an internationally noted resort and surrounding residential neighborhoods, the most active general aviation airport in San Diego County, a 2,000+-acre campus-industrial corridor (providing over 4 million square feet of light and general industrial uses), a million-plus square feet regional shopping mall, and a major auto mall (with over 20 dealerships). As of 1992 the assessed valuation of the City was \$6.4 billion. The split was 73 percent residential and 27 percent non-residential. The City is accessed by two freeways - Interstate 5 (which runs along the coast) and State Route 78 (which runs along the northern boundary of the City), by the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe rail line (which lies parallel to the I-5 route), and by several major roads following both inland and coastal routes.

III. HOW TO USE THIS GENERAL PLAN

A. THE HORIZON: GETTING THERE

It is customary for a general plan to indicate the official future period during which it will be in effect.

In some plans this period has a discrete beginning and end, with the end being tied to a specific "horizon year" 15 or 20 years in the future. The plan takes the position that it cannot anticipate the needs of the community beyond the horizon year and, therefore, the plan will be in effect only until that time, upon which it will have to be revised in order to have any on-going relevance.

Alternatively, the plan may be designated a "build-out" plan, without a horizon year. It is assumed that the plan will direct the future development of the city to some theoretical end-point (the "build-out" state) at which point all the land of the city will have been developed in accord with the policies and proposals of the plan.

Both approaches have merits and limitations. In considering the approach to use with this general plan, note was made of the way a city typically grows and evolves.

Carlsbad has followed the pattern typical of most cities in California. It started small, on undeveloped land, and continued to grow larger - neighborhood by neighborhood, district by district - over many years. Thus, "build-out" has occurred and continues to occur in a hierarchical way. First, lots build-out, followed by blocks, neighborhoods, districts, communities, and, once annexation ceases, eventually the entire city. For the various districts and neighborhoods development will occur at different times - and, hence, so will build-out.

Yet once a given district has been developed, change continues. With time: buildings and people age; families come and leave; infrastructure wears out and demands maintenance or replacement; commercial strategies evolve, resulting in changes to businesses; new industries are created; styles, needs and wants change; and everything is affected by new technologies and evolving social patterns.

Through it all each neighborhood and district typically follows a natural physical and social evolutionary pattern. Starting as new development it grows into maturity. Finally as the useful lives of buildings and facilities come to a close, it becomes ripe for renewal and redevelopment. This is the typical urban pattern.

In a city of any size, especially one developed over many years, neighborhoods and districts will exist at all stages of this natural evolution. While much of Carlsbad is newer, having been developed since the 1970s, it has its older neighborhoods, some of which are today designated as an official redevelopment district. Further, the City is only half built-out. The extrapolation of recent rates of land absorption suggests that the stock of vacant residential land may last until around 2015 and the stock of vacant non-residential land may last until about 2040. Under these assumptions, before the city absorbs all of its vacant land (reaching "build-out") many neighborhoods will have advanced through their life cycles and will be entering the next cycle through re-development.

The City has adopted an aggressive growth management plan in which major public facilities are being planned and their capacities sized to accommodate the yields of people and structures anticipated to result from fully utilizing the City's land in accord with the general plan. In this sense, there will be an upper limit on the ultimate population and intensity of development in Carlsbad and its sub-areas, no matter the stage of evolution of the individual neighborhoods and districts at any particular point in time. Hence, a build-out condition will eventually come about, at least in terms of the capacities of public facilities and the physical and financial resources needed to create and support them. This type of facilities planning requires a long-term orientation, because pipelines in the ground, roads, and other infrastructure facilities have useful lives ranging typically from 50 to over 100 years. Clearly, a vision (or horizon year) of only 15 to 20 years is inadequate for such planning.

In consideration of these observations, this general plan for the City of Carlsbad was designed without a stated horizon year. But, recognizing the reality of neighborhood evolution, neither is it a "build-out" plan in the traditional sense. Rather, this general plan is intended to be a living document, one which will grow and evolve with the dynamics of the community.

When adopted, the General Plan proposed a picture of an ideal, end-state in keeping with both the values set out in "Carlsbad-The Vision" (found at the beginning of this Vision and Introduction) and the land use policies and proposals. However, it is always to be understood that this theoretical end-state will probably never be realized, though the values and vision may continue to be carried forward. In keeping with the concept of a general plan cycle it is intended that the Carlsbad General Plan will be reviewed periodically, and that it will be amended from time to time, as circumstances and the public interest warrant. With each minor or major amendment the picture of that ideal end-state, toward which the City aspires, will have been changed and improved.

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Contents

In its entirety the Carlsbad General Plan consists of the following parts and sections:

- ☞ Vision and Introduction.
- ☞ Land Use Element.
- ☞ Circulation Element.
- ☞ Housing Element.
- ☞ Open Space and Conservation Element.
- ☞ Noise Element.
- ☞ Public Safety Element.
- ☞ Parks and Recreation Element.
- ☞ Arts Element.

It is available in two forms. The entire Carlsbad General Plan is packaged as a single document. Alternatively, the elements may be obtained individually. Any individual element is to be accompanied by this Vision and Introduction.

The Vision

At the beginning of this Vision and Introduction is a single page titled "Carlsbad - The Vision". Although short, this page contains ten overall goal statements, which, in combination, form the heart of the Carlsbad General Plan. These goals constitute not only aspirations and values for the City's ultimate development, but also performance standards by which the City's progress can be measured. As the title indicates, these ten goals represent the City's vision of future Carlsbad. Everything in this general plan is founded upon this vision.

The Elements

While they vary considerably in length, each element has the same fundamental organization, consisting of two major parts: a section containing introductory and background information, and a policy section.

The introduction and background section recites the requirements of state law for the particular element and speaks to the relationship of the element to the other elements of the Carlsbad General Plan. The balance of the section varies from element to element, but may contain additional background information, an analysis of issues and concerns, definitions, and/or generalized standards and criteria.

The policy section of each element is its heart. In this section the City establishes the "...statement of development policies...includ[ing] objectives, principles, standards and plan proposals" required by state law (Government Code Section 65302). There are three sub-sections setting out a) goals, b) objectives, and c) implementing policies and action programs.

What Are Goals, Objectives, and Implementing Policies and Programs?

The policy section of each element uses a hierarchy of planning statements ranging from the generalized to the specific. All of these statements are derived from the City's vision statement.

Goals –

A goal is a statement of an ideal future end-condition or state related to the public health, safety, or welfare toward which planning and planning implementation measures are directed. A goal is an expression of community values, and is, therefore, abstract in nature. Consequently, in this general plan a goal statement is not quantified, time dependent, or suggestive of specific actions for its achievement. (e.g. "Housing

Element Goal 2: New housing developed with a diversity of types, prices, tenures, densities, and locations and in sufficient quantity to meet the demand of anticipated City and regional growth.")

Objectives –

An objective is a specific end-condition or state that is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. It should be achievable and, when possible, measurable and time-specific. An objective may pertain to one particular aspect of a goal or may be one of several successive steps toward the achievement of a goal. Each goal should have one or more specific objectives describing what should result in trying to achieve the goal. (e.g. "Housing Element Objective 2.1.: Allow development of sufficient new housing to meet Carlsbad's share of the total regional housing need, as identified in SANDAG's Regional Housing Needs Statement, 1991-1996. Target: Approximately 6,273 units.")

Implementing Policies and Programs –

These statements articulate measures designed to bring about attainment of the objectives and goals. In the Carlsbad General Plan they range in specificity from generalized guidelines and principles, to procedures, to specific action programs. In measuring the progress the City makes towards its objectives, and, therefore towards its goals, it is the effectiveness of these implementing policies and programs that will be measured.

D. KEY SUBJECTS - CROSS REFERENCE

Some important topics are addressed in the General Plan in more than one place, due to the multi-dimensional range of issues associated with them. For example the City's general aviation airport is discussed in the Land Use Element, the Circulation Element, the Noise Element, and the Public Safety Element, each discussion being conducted in a somewhat different context.

The following matrix has been prepared (See Table 1: Matrix of Key General Plan Subjects) to assist the user of the General Plan in locating all of the information about a given subject when that subject is addressed in more than one place.

The horizontal axis of the matrix lists the General Plan sections, including each of the elements, the Vision and Introduction, and the appendices. The vertical axis lists those important topics that are addressed in a substantive way in more than one location of the General Plan. At each intersection of a general plan section with a topic area, the matrix gives information about the kind of discussion (if any) that is contained in the section about that topic area. If a "B" appears, the topic is discussed in the section as background information; if a "GO" appears, the topic is addressed in one or more of the goals or objectives of the element; and if an "I" appears, the topic is addressed in an implementing policy or program. If the intersection is blank, then the topic is not discussed in a substantive way in that section.

Please note that this matrix does not contain an exhaustive listing of all of the topics addressed in the Carlsbad General Plan. It lists only those major topics that are addressed in more than one place and only if there is substantive discussion in those places.